



1.05 CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Purpose Statement

An ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluating children's learning underpins the educational program delivered by Windermere's Family Day Care service and involves educators in critically thinking about what is offered and why. Written plans, records of child assessment and evaluations underpin practice with children and families.

Critical reflection and careful planning increase the value of children's time in education and care by ensuring that the educational program and practice responds to children's interests and scaffolds their learning.

In delivering a successful educational program to children, partnerships with families are considered critical. A strong, open and transparent partnership is crucial to the positive development of children.

Scope

This policy applies to Family Day Care educators, children accessing education and care services and their families.

Definitions

Program - The educational program delivered by the education and care service.

Approved learning framework - Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, and confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.

Child-centred - Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.

Program learning opportunities - All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.

Practice - Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development.

Intentional teaching - Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.

Responsive teaching and scaffolding - Educators respond to children's ideas and play and extend children's learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback.

Child directed learning - Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.

Assessment and planning - Educators and co-ordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child by assessing their individual needs.



1.05 CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Assessment and planning cycle - Each child's learning and development is assessed or evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysing learning, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection.

Critical reflection - Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation.

Information for families - Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.

Policy Statement

TO PROVIDE CHILDREN ENGAGED IN EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAXIMISE THEIR POTENTIAL AND DEVELOP A FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE SUCCESS IN LEARNING.

Procedures

General

1. Educators are required to base their educational program on an approved learning framework. There are two approved learning frameworks Windermere provides which outline practices that support and promote children's learning:
 - The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/edcare/Pages/veyladf.aspx?Redirect=1#link80>
 - My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia
<https://www.education.gov.au/my-time-our-place>
2. The program should contribute to the outcomes for children found in the Early Years Learning Framework, as follows:
 - a. The child will have a strong sense of identity
 - b. The child will be connected with and contribute to their world
 - c. The child will have a strong sense of wellbeing
 - d. The child will be a confident and involved learner
 - e. The child will be an effective communicator.
3. The following must be documented for every preschool aged child:
 - a. Assessments of the child's developmental needs, interests, experiences and participation in the educational program.
 - b. Assessments of child's progress against the outcomes of the program.
4. The following must be documented for every school aged child:



1.05 CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

- a. Evaluations of children's wellbeing
 - b. Evaluation of children's development
 - c. Evaluations of children's learning.
5. A copy of the program cycle provided by Windermere is displayed by the educator at a place that families are able to see it.
 6. A copy of the program is at all times up to date and available for inspection on request.

Sharing Information with Families

1. All parents must be provided with the following:
 - a. A copy of the planning cycle provided by Windermere
 - b. Information about the child's participation in the program
 - c. Assessments of the child's developmental needs, interests, experiences and participation in the educational program
 - d. Assessments of child's progress against the outcomes of the program
 - e. Evaluations of children's wellbeing, development and learning for school aged children.

Developing and Documenting a Curriculum/Plan

1. Use information gathered from families upon enrolment regarding the child's needs, interest and family backgrounds. It is important to develop a partnership between parents and Educators to ensure that consistency between home and the Service occurs and that the best possible care is provided.
2. Each child's learning will be based on their interests and strengths and guided by educators.
3. Educators must work in collaboration with families to provide relevant learning experiences for each child, based on their interests and family experiences.
4. Educators will observe and record the strengths and learning of each child.
5. Educators will work closely with children and families to produce ideas for the curriculum.
6. Learning Outcomes will be linked to the curriculum during and after each child's learning has occurred.
7. The curriculum will be constructed on the children's interests, educators extending children's interests, child initiated experiences and family contribution.
8. Where appropriate, the educator will liaise with external agencies and support persons to best educate and care for children with additional needs.
9. Educators work with the Coordination Unit in preparing and/or implementing the curriculum which collaborates with the service philosophy.
10. A balance between indoor and outdoor experiences is planned for with large blocks of unstructured time for child initiated play.



1.05 CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

11. The curriculum will be evaluated and reflected upon continuously by educators.
12. Promote children's physical activity by supporting the development of their gross motor skills and fostering their emerging fundamental movement skills through a range of intentionally planned and child initiated active play learning experiences.
13. Implement an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluating children's learning which will underpin the educational program and involves educators in critically thinking about what is obtainable and why.
14. Document children's experiences and their responses to the environment making children's learning visible to children, educators and families and promotes shared learning and collaboration.
15. Provide experiences that include both structured and unstructured learning times catering for children's individual needs, interests and are age appropriate.
16. Ensure materials and equipment reflect the cultural diversity and values of individual families (within the family context of the educator's home).
17. Provide experiences that actively promote and initiate the investigation of ideas, complex concepts and thinking, reasoning and hypothesising.
18. Provide opportunities for children to be active daily through a balance of planned and spontaneous experiences within the indoor and outdoor environment.
19. Plan realistic curriculum goals for children based on observation and assessment of individual needs and interests.
20. Use a variety of documentation methods to reflect on children's experiences, thinking and learning.
21. Ensure critical reflection clearly determines all aspects of planning events and experiences, considering at all times different perspectives, children's learning needs and opportunities for spontaneous play. Teaching strategies and environmental changes will also inform planning.

Implementing a Curriculum/Plan

1. Every child will be equally valued. Their achievements & learning will be celebrated.
2. Modifications are made with support from the Coordination Unit in the environment for children with special needs.
3. Support families through positive, respectful and reciprocal relationships through regular communication (refer to: *Family Communication procedure*).
4. Ensure each child is acknowledged for their uniqueness in a positive way.
5. Support children's efforts, assisting and encouraging as appropriate.
6. Be consistently aware of and responsive to children who may require additional support, assistance or attention, noticing and listening carefully to children's concerns and discussing diverse perspectives on issues of inclusion and exclusion and fair and unfair behaviour.
7. Respond to children's ideas and play and use intentional teaching to scaffold and extend each child's learning.



1.05 CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

8. Promote children's participation in a range of safe active play learning experiences.
9. Make sure information about the child's participation in the program is available for families.
10. Encourage communication with families about physical activity, gross motor and fundamental movement skills development.
11. Explore ideas and theories using imagination, creativity and play, during large blocks of uninterrupted time.
12. Intentionally scaffold children's understanding and learning.
13. Provide children with ongoing encouragement and positive reinforcement.
14. Make use of 'teachable moments' to extend children's learning.
15. Respond to children's displays of learning dispositions by commenting on them and providing encouragement and additional ideas.
16. View children as active participants and decision makers, working with each child's unique qualities and abilities.
17. Seek opportunities within the routine for play and learning.
18. Ensure that all children's experiences are recognised and valued with equitable access to resources and opportunities to demonstrate their learning.

Physical Activity

Windermere aims to promote children's participation in physical activity and encourages educators to do this by:

1. Fostering children's Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) including, running, galloping, hopping, jumping, leaping, side-sliding, skipping, overarm throwing, catching, striking a stationary ball, kicking, underarm throwing and stationary dribbling through role modelling appropriate skills.
2. Providing active play experiences that encourage children to explore, be creative and challenge their development
3. Providing space, time, and resources for children to revisit and practice FMS and engage in active play
4. Educators attend professional development to enhance their skills and knowledge about the importance of physical activity in children
5. Providing positive instruction, role modelling and advice to children as they develop and improve their FMS.
6. Working in collaboration with families and professionals to provide active experiences that are inclusive of all children
7. Assisting children to develop daily habits, understanding and skills that support health and wellbeing.



1.05 CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The Goals of a Curriculum

All educators programs will provide a variety of developmentally appropriate experiences and materials that are selected to achieve the following goals:

1. Foster positive self-concept
2. Develop social skills
3. Encourage children to think, reason, question and experiment
4. Encourage language development
5. Enhance physical development and skills
6. Encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety and nutritional practices
7. Encourage creative expression
8. Respect cultural diversity of staff and children
9. Respect gender diversity.

Relevant Standards/Legislation

- National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care Services including:
 - Education and Care Services National Law 2011
 - Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Related Policies & Links

- *Attendance Records* procedure
- *Record Keeping* procedure
- *Confidentiality and Privacy (Children & Families)* procedure